LHS Library

THE MUSKET

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

May 2006 Volume 6; Issue 8

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Department Head Resigns Amid Controversy

By Devaki Raj

John Papadonis, head of the Social Studies department at Lexington High School, was recently was asked to resign from his position. This forced resignation has sparked controversy and anger within the social studies department. The April 27 copy of the Lexington Minuteman, the town newspaper, printed a long Guest Commentary which was an open letter from the members of the social studies department protesting Papadonis' demotion and asking the admininistration to rescind its demand and to reject his letter of resignation.

The commentary in the Minuteman outlined the many contributions the social studies department felt Papadonis has made to the professionalism and morale within that department as well as his contributions to the Lexington Public Schools and especially to the high school during his tenure as department head.

The commentary opened by stating, "We urge the administration to rescind its request for Mr. Papadonis' resignation and that they reject his letter of resignation. We believe that Mr. Papadonis has done an outstanding job as our leader and mentor and feel that his being forced out of his leadership role is entirely unwarranted."~ The column went on to list the various achievements and characteristics of Papadonis including his devotion to diversifying the social studies curricula and implementing events and projects, such as the sophomore honors research project, that have benefitted students over the years. Other items mentioned were his role in helping to plan the LHS Diversity Day, the initiation of the History Day competition and his role as chairperson of the committee that studied student stress at LHS.

U.S. History teacher Richard Kollen said, "Mr. Papadonis is a department head who is well respected and well liked by his department; we are truly puzzled by what has transpired."~ LHS Principal Michael Jones, LHS principal would not comment on why Papadonis was asked to resign but did praise Papadonis' years of service describing him as a "valued and respected member of the faculty."

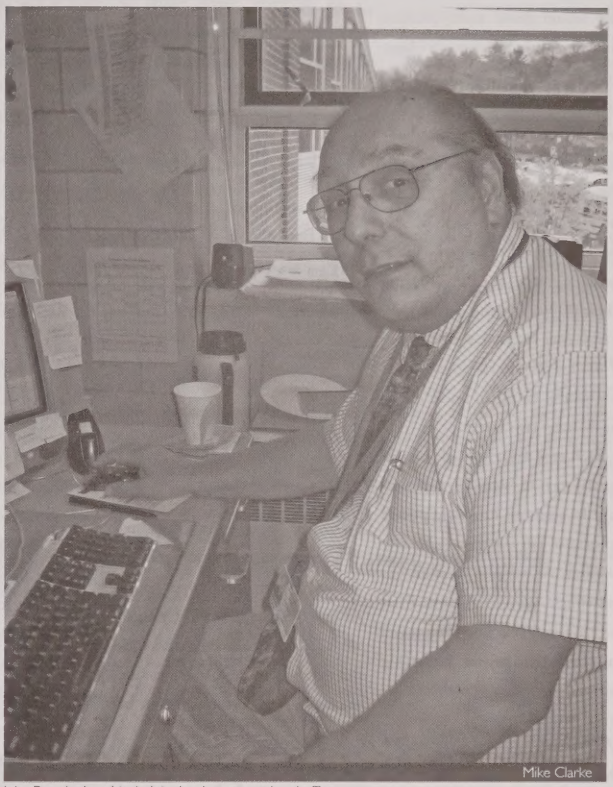
Several social studies staff members were angered by the surprise resignation. Wendy Wilson, the AP European History and TV Production teacher, said, "I was appalled that someone with the quality and stature of Mr. Papadonis was forced to resign. I have been working here for thirty-five years and he has been the best department head I have worked for. I don't know how, short of murder, the administration thinks it justifies forcing someone to resign who has his [Papadonis'] number of years of faithful service to the system. It is yet another factor contributing to the lowest morale in this school ever, ever, ever...It is worse than when we [the teachers] went on strike."

U.S. history teacher Larry David called Papadonis "one of the best administrators we have." He added, "This hurts the morale of the department and the school as a whole."

Many other social studies teachers had only kind words to say about their department head. A few teachers, however, declined to comment on this controversy saying they did not want to violate Papadonis' privacy, while others indicated they did not wish to speak on the record because they feared retribution.

Papadonis will still be teaching history at the high school even after his resignation as department head.~When asked to comment, Principal Dr. Michael Jones, said, "Next year, [Papadonis] will continue to contribute to the High School in a broader capacity," He described Papadonis' future roll as "Co-chair for the High School's NEASC self-study committee and as a curriculum leader in working with Ms. Carol Pilarski, Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Projects, in helping the school meet the rigorous curriculum standards of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges."

Jones said he was "confident that Papadonis will do a great job." Otherwise Jones would not comment on the reasons for the resignation nor on the open letter from the social studies department printed in the The Minuteman.



Mike Clarke

John Papadonis, at his desk in the department head office.

NEWS BRIEFS

- Day of Silence was held on April 26th. Security was stepped up. No incidents were reported.
- The Senate is currently debating a Community Service Report. This report is an investigation as well a recommendation on improving the Lexington High Community Service Program. These recommendations will be submitted to the Principal to review and implement into the community service requirements.
- The Yearbook recently received several of awards from Columbia University, including the Silver Crown from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association. The Yearbook editors stayed in New York City for \ three days to attend this conference.
- Lexington Lincoln-Douglas and Policy debate teams sent 12 debaters to the Tournament of Champions held at the University of Kentucky over the weekend of April 29.
- Academic teams have received multiple awards. The National Ocean Science Bowl A-team won third place at States. Science Olympiad won fifth place at States. The Department of Energy Science Team placed third at States. The Math team won first place at States and is preparing for the New England Competition on Friday, May 29th.

LABBB Workers Protest

On Tuesday, May 9, employees of LABBB (The special education program of Lexington, Arlington, Bedford, Belmont and Burlington) held a demonstration outside the high-school at the end of the day. The LABBB employees have been working without a contract for almost three years. Mike Allen, a LABBB teacher, described the year as "frustrating." The salaries of LABBB teachers have been frozen since last year, and both the Program Director and the Executive Director have received raises.

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FEATURES

School Touring Choir Pays a Visit to Armenia

By Emma Puka-Beals and Chrissy Kugel

Over April break, a group of LHS music students, united under the title of Touring Choir, set out for a whirlwind tour of Armenia that would prove more eventful than any of the students or chaperones could have ever imagined. After a five hour bus ride to JFK international airport, a nine hour flight to Russia (where the choir only stayed for 10 hours,) and a three hour flight to Yerevan, Armenia, a crowd of awestruck Armenians greeted the LHS Touring Choir 2006. The choir piled onto a bus and traveled the final leg of the journey to the guest house that would be our humble abode for the next two weeks.

Each student who took part in the trip carried his or her own luggage in addition to a fifty pound suitcase of aid supplies to be distributed at various orphanages and villages across Armenia. Even after roughly 26 hours of travel and the tedious process of getting to our rooms (our hotel had no elevators), we were still bursting with excitement and energy. Most of the choir spent the first "night" in Yerevan watching the sun rise rather than getting much-needed sleep.

In between many hours of sightseeing, Frisbee, and independent exploration, we managed to squeeze in a little singing along the way. Our eclectic repertoire included traditional songs from North and Latin America, Spain, Germany, and of course, Armenia. We also threw in a few well-known Beatles tunes, which were very appreciated by many Armenians. Much to our surprise, our performances were all extremely well received by the audiences. We often had spontaneous performances at the places we visited. During one, a man began to cry. He told Brian O'Connell, the LHS music director who conducted the Touring Choir, that the reason he was crying was that he was so moved that there are many Armenians in America who never return and it is amazing that there are Americans who would come to Armenia just to be there. These words stayed with us for the duration of our trip. While in Armenia, we collaborated with an outstanding children's choir known as the "Armenian Little Singers." We befriended the members and exchanged songs.

Each student who took part in the trip carried his or her own luggage in addition to a fifty pound suitcase of aid supplies to be distributed at various orphanages and villages across Armenia.

In our final concert, when we performed all of our pieces, we were joined on stage by the Little Singers for several pieces, including the Armenian national anthem. Our final concert was advertised by huge signs posted outside of opera square and around the city. It was filmed and is currently broadcasted on Armenian television.

When we weren't performing, we were sightseeing at beautiful churches and monasteries carved into mountain sides, or visiting exquisite museums. For the community service element of the trip, we visited orphanages to spend time with the children, sing songs for them, and give out aid supplies we brought with us. At both orphanages we were honored by performances from the children, performances that brought many of our own singers to tears. Spending time at the orphanages was endlessly rewarding.

When we weren't singing or sightseeing, were able to spend our free time exploring Yerevan under the supervision of a chaperone (and sometimes an Armenian-speaking guide.) During these hours, we experienced some unmistakable cultural differences. For example, it was a typical occurrence to be photographed by a complete stranger while walking down the street. "It's something we don't really notice because we come from a cultural melting pot," suggested Lucas Levy on the topic of this unusual attention. "In the US, we're used to seeing people of all different backgrounds in society. In most other places, foreigners are a pretty big deal." Although the attention we received was first viewed with skepticism and even fear, we soon realized that this attention was nothing more than genuine and harmless curiosity.

Unfortunately, there were a few grey clouds shadowing this sunny experience. Towards the end of the trip there was an event involving alcohol consumption that left students and chaperones on edge and upset. As a result, many students ended their trip on a low note (and we don't mean musically!) The students who took part in the unruly behavior on the trip all feel extreme regret and remorse

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Chinese Exchange adds to LHS

By Karan Mudghal

In accordance with the students of LHS's languages and diversity, the annual exchange trips were sent off for another year of good food, amazing people, and incredible places. Not to mention, the unforgettable experiences!

This year, after four years at the high school, the Mandarin teacher was able to organize a trip to China! On its maiden trip, the exchange consisted of 8 students our teacher and one other chaperone. In our group of ten we journeyed from Beijing, China's capital in the north, and then to Hangzhou and Shanghai, the business capital in the south.

In the capital, we were able to see the famous Tianamen Square, the Forbidden Palace, and of course; The Great Wall of China! These cultural landmarks owed to the artistic appeal of China to all of us on the trip.

After a few days in Beijing we were on to Hangzhou where we stayed with the host families for one week and were able to experience school life amongst the students. Here we were able to experience their state of the art facilities, such as their driver's ed. which functions just as a driving video game does.

After one week we were all sad to depart from our friends, and from the beauty, for many who travel there call Hangzhou "heaven on earth". Arriving in the economic and business sector of China in Shanghai, we were able to get some shopping done while seeing some of the more entertaining aspects of China, such as the skilled Shanghai Acrobatic Troupe.

After two long weeks in a country so alluring here in the west, we were sad to leave its grandeur and beauty, all of us leaving with plans to come back in the future. Thanks to our teacher Ms. Pan, our other chaperone, and to the hospitality of the teachers in Hangzhou, and of the travel guides in Beijing and Shanghai, this trip was declared highly successful in creating strong bonds between these two countries of the U.S.A. and China, as well as creating strong bonds between two great schools of Lexington High School and Hangzhou Xuejun High School.

With the next trip to occur most likely in 2008, it is strongly recommended by all of us to go on this trip, especially when you will see China in her grandest time, just before the 2008 Beijing Olympics!

LABBB Workers Protest • FROM PAGE 1

The LABBB staff has been in negotiations for several months. The mediation sessions occur approximately once a month, although there have already been two sessions this month. Allen described how the LABBB employees feel that there have been unnecessary delays in the negotiating process.

He said, "They can take as long as they want, because their mediators are paid for each session." LABBB employees who attend the negotiations are not paid for their time.

Allen said, "One of our biggest sticking points is healthcare. We want a fair and equitable health plan."

The LABBB employees claim they will continue demonstrating until they reach their goals.

Bite Size

By Abha Gallewale

Looking for a place for delicious food? Sure, there are plenty. But one of them will have you savoring its food and give you good nutrition while it's at it. Know Fat, a restaurant which recently opened in Bedford is just the place.

Mostly known for serving burgers and wraps, Know Fat combines the desire in all of us to eat scrumptious stuff (even though it may not be so good for us) and still keep the calorie and fat intake low. A turkey burger has 167 calories, while even a sirloin has only 220! Besides lunch and dinner, you can also get a good breakfast at Know Fat; "Protein Packed Pancakes", breakfast burritos, and specialty cereals are all available in the morning to give a healthy start to the day. Breakfast is priced quite nicely: most of the cereals, pancakes, and burritos are between two and three dollars. For lunch, though, it's sometimes necessary to dig a little deeper in your pocket. Ordinary burgers can be priced at about 5 dollars, while specialty sandwiches, like the "Bison Mushroom Jack" burger can cost close to 8!

Know Fat also has other locations, so if you can't make it to Bedford, try the ones in Waltham, Downtown Crossing, and Woburn. In case there is no time to go to a proper sit-down restaurant, Know Fat doubles as a store, where many healthy snacks and foods are available for purchase. That way, you can enjoy nutrition on the go!

Quoted in the Boston Herald as a "Proven Recipe", the place was even written about in the Wall Street Journal. That's quite a feat for a chain that is still mostly in Massachusetts, and has only been around for about six years.

So go check it out! This is your one stop for delectable food that won't make you nervous about the nutrition. Visit Know Fat today!

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EDITORIALS

Girl Gets Popular, Girl Gets Problem, Girl... Fixes Problem? Image over Quality in Modern Literature

By Josiah Reibstein

Current American culture is far from authentic. Entertainment holds little value - an endless supply of reality television, mindless movies, and brand-endorsed pop artists - and this contamination spreads to literature as well. Knowing this, it becomes a little clearer why Kaavya Viswanathan is in such a predicament right now.

For a brief period, Viswanathan was the flavor of the month. Winner of the Scholastic Writing Award, literary "prodigy," and sophomore at none other than Harvard University, her cute little package of a novel was quickly rising to become a bestseller. Amazon.com hailed it as a "lively and irresistible first novel" and Publisher's Weekly noted that "Viswanathan's eye-rolling intelligence shines through on every page." It's only recently that people are starting to realize that this intelligence may not have been her own. Several elements of the novel - the plot, the character, and in some instances nearly verbatim passages - had been, as Viswanathan said, "unconsciously internalized" and "borrowed" for her own book from published author Megan McCafferty's bestseller's "Sloppy Firsts" and "Second Helpings."

Now no one likes Viswanathan. Let's face it - she exemplifies everything the American public likes to hate: the "successful" wunderkind unmasked to be no more extraordinary than her peers, an Ivy League student, a privileged girl with few real worries.

There's a sense of betrayal to find that the person being lauded doesn't actually deserve her praise, and it shows in how people have been reacting to the news of the plagiarism. Her publisher, Little Brown, has removed the book from shelves. It doesn't look likely that they will return it.

However, Little Brown is certainly not blameless. Not only did they promise Viswanathan a hefty sum to write the novel before it was even begun, they helped her develop the concept "more than we usually do." Jennifer Walsh, a member of the agency that first snatched up Viswanathan, said "We had all recognized that Kaavya had the craftsmanship, she's beautiful and charming, she just needed to find the right novel that would speak to her generation and to people beyond her years as well."

They finally found their novel - a somewhat sickeningly sweet description of an intelligent, perceptive, rich young Indian-American girl's quest to get into Harvard. Little Brown was very careful to broadcast the image of the author as well - her striking affinity with language at such a young age, her overachievement in every subject, even her physical attractiveness. Viswanathan's plagiarism is no mere sin, but she stopped becoming a writer the moment she let Little Brown start helping her out.

She may indeed be talented, but it was arrogant and premature of her to think that she could make a splash as a novelist at such a young age. Writing is an art form that relies on experience and growth. And on top of it all, the novel isn't that great. The writing is clunky, rife with cliches, and blissfully ignorant of a life beyond that of Viswanathan's own. "Write what you know" is a perfectly good motto, but only if you know more than your own sheltered life. Writer's should be praised because they are good, not because they are good for their age, not because they are also Harvard students, and certainly not because of their image.

But image is everything these days. Viswanathan's gem of a creation is only one of the many sleek, brightly-adorned books crowding the shelves of chain stores known as "chick-lit", sister products of badly-written thrillers, sappy romances, and deluded fantasy. Her age helped her rise above the other mediocrities, and for a short time people couldn't get enough of her. Now she's been exposed for what she really is - just another teenager, nothing more. Little Brown is to blame for having her believe otherwise, she is to blame for complying. And the people who lifted her on a pedestal in the first place are to blame for their ignorance that their icon was just as unremarkable as any other teenager scribbling their stress into a spiral notebook.

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

"Smoking" Delivers Unfiltered Laughs for All

By Kevin Slane

While "American Dreamz" is the more mainstream, more accessible mockumentary of the moment in Hollywood, "Thank You for Smoking" clearly blows it out of the water with its endlessly quotable dialogue and brilliant characters. The movie, which centers on tobacco lobbyist Nick Naylor, played by a smarmy Aaron Eckhart, is a sly satire of the tobacco industry that doesn't take sides. Smokers and non-smokers alike will enjoy the sly humor of first-time director Jason Reitman, the son of famed director Ivan Reitman (Ghostbusters, Meatballs, Evolution.) You cannot help but root for Naylor in this movie, as he embarks on a one-man crusade against all the anti-tobacco legislation that seems to be popping up in the House of Representatives. Naylor does not lack in self-confidence, as he tells the audience "Michael Jordan plays ball. Charles Manson kills people. I talk."

Some priceless moments include his attempt to hush the cancer-stricken Marlboro Man, who has suddenly become vehemently anti-tobacco, and his assault on the cheese-eating, Birkenstock-clad William H. Macy, playing a clever Vermont senator who tries to stand tough on tobacco. When Macy attempts to present the number of deaths caused by tobacco products, Naylor turns it against him, pointing out how cholesterol is actually the number one killer, and that a senator from a state known for its cheese production can hardly complain about tobacco deaths when Vermonters are clogging the arteries of millions.

The movie, which centers on tobacco lobbyist Nick Naylor, played by a smarmy Aaron Eckhart, is a sly satire of the tobacco industry that doesn't take sides.

Even in the opening scene of the film, Naylor assails a critic from the American Cancer Society, claiming that "you want this boy to die, so he can build your case against tobacco." As he leaves, the cancer-stricken teen, who has been undergoing intensive chemotherapy, gives him a high-five. "Smoking" also features shining performances by Rob Lowe and Adam Brody of "The OC" as a pair of Hollywood big shots looking to bring back the days of celebrity smoking in films, and by Robert Duvall as a wealthy tobacco kingpin.

All in all, "Thank you for Smoking" delivers boatloads of unfiltered satire to be enjoyed by anyone, from the most vehement anti-smoking campaigner to the biggest chain-smoker on the planet.

What's Hot and What's Not

By Rachel Kase and Josiah Reibstein

HOT	NOT
Mockumentaries: Thank You for Smoking and American Dreamz remind us why it's fun to laugh at ourselves.	Kaavya Vaswanithan: Turns out the cheesy, sloppily written teen "novel" she published isn't even hers.
"Internalization:" This concept eliminates the tiresome "creativity" element that book-writing previously necessitated.	Red Sox: Every day fans regret that Arroyo trade a little more.
Getting into college: Now you can legitimize your plummeting GPA.	Three Years and Three more Weeks of LHS: Freshmen, good luck to you.
Three More weeks of LHS: It's almost too soon.	Prom Expenses: You didn't expect to spend your life's savings on one night's festivities.

FEATURES

Armenia Trip • FROM PAGE 2

for their irresponsibility.

"I can not begin to say how sorry I am for what happened on the trip" says an anonymous Touring Choir member with great sincerity. "I feel largely responsible for depriving others of what I feel to have been the most meaningful experience of my life. I hope that my actions do not prevent future students from enjoying the same experiences. I will do everything in my power to keep that from happening."

Overall, the trip to Armenia was a truly life-changing experience. It was educationally and musically enlightening for all members of the trip. It is important not to allow the few negative experiences of the trip to overshadow the overwhelming number of positive ones. We can only hope that more students will have the ability to take part in such a rewarding experience in the future.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Black Eyed Peas Put on a Show to Remember

By Casey Makovich

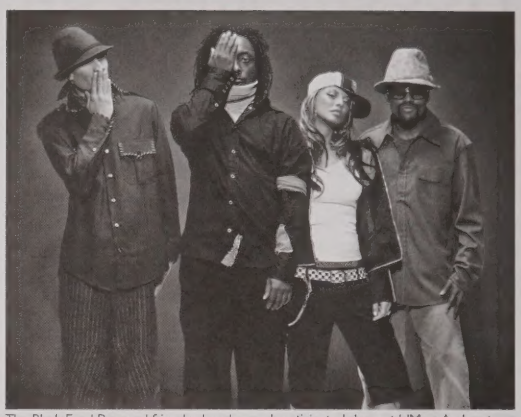
The Black Eyed Peas' concert performance superceded fans' expectations at UMass – Amherst, providing a memorable night full of jocular antics and wild, fan-friendly hip-hop. The group's Honda Civic Tour features songs from its newest album, Monkey Business. The Peas did not solely rely on their Monkey Business tracks, however, as they also performed old favorites like "Where is the Love" and "Let's Get it Started."

The Peas reached out to the audience by joking frankly and teaching about hip-hop. Each member of the group played up his or her individuality in various improvised solo "jam sessions".

Each artist selected a song that would then lead into one of his or her songs as part of the group. Fergie, for example, sang "Sweet Child O' Mine" by the Guns N' Roses and followed it "Don't Lie". Other songs preformed included "No Woman, No Cry" by Bob Marley and "OPP" by Naughty by Nature.

While some people enjoyed a taste of other music styles, others would have preferred to hear more of the Black Eyed Peas hits to which they were accustomed. The four members of the group were all very energetic, and knew how to get the crowd excited; their stage presence as a whole was amazing. Everything from the lights to their dancing was pitch-perfect.

The Peas were also very generous in sharing their stage time with other talented performers. They directed attention to the opening bands Flipsyde and The Pussycat Dolls, the Peas' drummer and saxophonist, and also their professional break-dancer, who wowed the crowd with his impressive moves. Flipsyde brought strands of different music genres together in their eclectic mix of musical style for their opening act. Their music has traces of hip-hop/rap, R&B and rock all tied together. Following them were The Pussycat Dolls who got the crowd hot and bothered with their somewhat burlesque performance. They played their most popular songs "Beep", "Don't Cha" and "Stickwitu," along with others from their album. All in all, each of the acts contributed its own personal touch to create a memorable night of entertainment.



The Black Eyed Peas and friends played a much-anticipated show at UMass Amherst.

Top 10: Season Finales You Can't Wait to See

By Kelly Siegel

1. **Gilmore Girls-** What's this we hear about Lorelai being pregnant?

2. **The West Wing-** Now that Donna and Josh finally got together, all we need is a VP

3. **American Idol-** Yes, it's cliché, but apparently addictive too!

4. **The O.C.-** Sigh. They're really going off to college.

5. **Grey's Anatomy-** What will happen with Izzy and Denny? Will Addison and McDreamy ever work it out?

6. **Law & Order: SVU-** It's time for all you boys out there to admit you're addicted

7. **Lost-** It just keeps getting better and better.

8. **CSI-** What crazy circumstances for murder will they think of next?!

9. TV is so bad these days that I can't even come up with 10 TV shows worth watching.

Lost was one of this season's most popular shows, with a much-anticipated finale.

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SPORTS

Boys' Track Team Gains Familiar Momentum

Mike Grossi

Coming off a season in which the team beat Reading for the first time in 32 years to capture the Middlesex League, the Lexington Boys Track team carried the lofty goals and expectations that come with such territory. The team is one of the best in years, and so far has performed flawlessly.

In the match against Stoneham, Lexington was able to capture many events on the way to a 75.5-60.5 victory. Senior Jeff Churchill captured 1st place in Javelin, out throwing the second place thrower by over 13 feet. Senior Mark Liu qualified for States with his tremendous throw in the shot-put. In the 300 meter hurdles, Lexington took a clean sweep, with senior Eric Dyer coming in first. Meikle Pascal also had an admirable day with first in the High Jump, and placing in both the 200 and the 400 as well.

In their next meet, Lexington beat Melrose 74 to 62. Churchill again took first in Javelin with a throw of 136 feet 2 inches. Senior Nathan Yonren took first in the 100, and Pascal took first in the 400. Lexington then blew out Belmont 118.5 to 17.5. Lexington swept shot with Mark Liu taking first. Perhaps the team's most steady performer, Churchill took first in javelin by out throwing the next place by 30 feet.

In their latest performance, Lexington beat Woburn 70 to 66. Senior Greg McKenna took first in the 300 meter hurdles with a blistering time of 42.9 seconds. Lexington then swept the 100 meter, with Junior Darius Walker taking first.

At this point, boys track is undefeated with four wins. The team is running on all cylinders, and hopefully the momentum gained at the beginning of the season will carry them to another Middlesex League title.

SPORTS

With Young Talent, Boys' Tennis Team Starts Strong

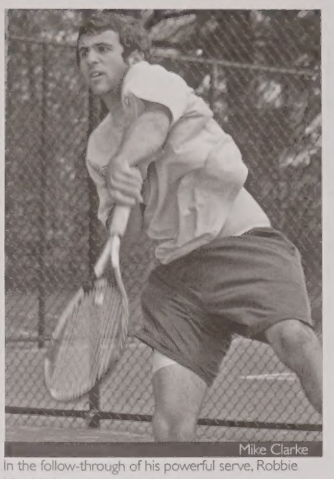
Austin Lee

A year removed from reaching the Middlesex League semifinals, the Lexington boys tennis team has restocked with young talent in hopes of improving on last year's success.

Although the team lost three senior starters from last year's playoff team, returning senior captains Robert Havdala and Nicholas Kim have anchored the team to an early 5-2 record.

After a key loss to league rival Winchester, the team came back and played with fire to blow out Wakefield, winning all of their matches. First and second singles Alex Katz and Havdala both won in straight sets, while Andrew Schreiber substituted admirably for injured Marshall Collins, winning in a third set tiebreaker. Both doubles teams won without losing a game.

Early in the season, the team is looking for its young members to gain experience. Freshmen Harris Rollinger, Nathan Katz, and Isaac Fuhrman are showing flashes of potential, and are projected to be star contributors in the years to come. As the team continues to gel, the skill and depth Coach John Hogan has stocked his roster with will lead the team towards victory.



Mike Clarke

In the follow-through of his powerful serve, Robbie Havdala is en route to a victory.

Baseball • FROM PAGE 6

fifth inning.

Lexington then collected their fourth win of the season, a 4-0 victory over Winchester. Ruocco (five innings) and McKenna (two innings) combined for the shutout. LeBlanc, Ruocco and Curley all had RBIs in the victory. This win was followed by a close victory over Watertown, 2-1. Looking at the remainder of the season, the team is anticipating tough competition from Reading, Burlington and Everett. Reynolds, who describes his style as very "enthusiastic and full of energy," says Lexington can compete with anyone in the Middlesex League. He and his mates hope to continue to uphold their wining record.

Offbeat Athlete of the Month: Victor Wu • FROM PAGE 6

his ability to connect with others and help them out. He can be seen instructing the younger players on their techniques and is enthusiastically devoted to their development. In fact, the large increase in membership of the club can be at least partly attributed to the strong commitment that Wu has for the club. As first year member Batel Bletcher commented "I joined the club because Ping Pong is fun and Victor is a great teacher."

Wu discovered his love for the game in second grade when his father bought him a table. His early years were marked by a struggle to master the game. Now those years when he "didn't even know how to hold the paddle properly" seem distant with his current success. He has finished 3rd in multiple tournaments in Massachusetts and 5th in a tournament that hosted players from all over New England. The tournament in New England boasted 16 of the regions top players including the number one player at Brown University who soon learned what many others have: Victor Wu can play Ping Pong. Wu calls his victory over Brown's best the defining moment of his young career.

Considering the quantum leap Wu has made in less than a decade of playing Ping Pong, one can expect a very bright future for this star.

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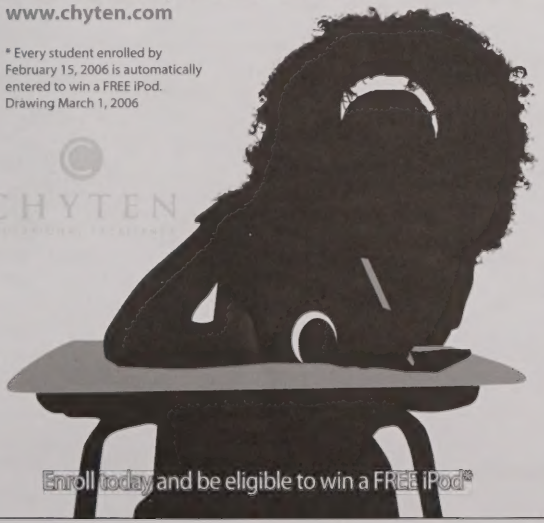

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Roller Coaster Ride for Boys' Lacrosse Team

By Simon Lehar

After an impressive 4-0 start for the boys lacrosse team with solid wins over BC High, Belmont, Woburn, and Wakefield, the Minutemen have gone 1-3 with losses to Winchester, Xaverian, and Andover, and a win over Concord Carlisle. After the three-game losing streak, Coach Walsh scheduled a long practice to get the team back into its groove. In the win over Concord Carlisle, goals came from sophomore Tyler Gelnaw with three, seniors David Robinson and Luke DiLillo with two a piece, and senior Drew Smith, who sealed the deal in the fourth quarter.

With 8:30 left, DiLillo delivered the only goal of the first quarter. In the beginning of the second quarter, after a monstrous hit by Nate Blake, Robinson scooped the ball up and scored his first goal of the game, making it 2-0 Lexington. Several minutes later, Gelnaw got his first, evading two defenders before scoring. After a Concord Carlisle goal, Robinson came back with his second and final goal of the game as he emerged from a pile of defenders to put the ball in the back of the net. DiLillo finished off the scoring for the half, making the score 5-1 Lexington.

After allowing another goal in the third quarter, the Minutemen fought back and Tyler Gelnaw managed to score his second of the game with a bouncing ball past the goalie. The fourth quarter proved to be just as successful as the previous three, with Gelnaw put away his third and senior Drew Smith tallying his first. While the Minutemen were certainly successful the offensive front, they also showcased a tenacious and aggressive defense led by seniors Alex Abramo and Adam Leonard.

Out of their three losses, the Minutemen have fortunately only lost to one Middlesex League opponent, Winchester, thus retaining their high spot in the Middlesex League standings. The Minutemen couldn't have picked a better time to get back on track as they head into the "league games" portion of their season, the results of which will largely determine their playoff status. If the boys are successful, the 2006 season will mark their fifth consecutive appearance as playoff contenders. Yet for four years, the Minutemen have be unable to gain a playoff victory, losing annually in the first match of each playoff season. Here's to hoping that their luck will change this year.

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Solid Pitching Propels Baseball Team to Victories

By Stuart Grimes

The LHS Boys Varsity Baseball team had a strong start to the 2006 season, opening with a record of 5-2. Seniors Kenneth Kaufman, Nick Ruocco and junior Ross Curley captain this year's promising team. One strength the baseball team had going into this year was speed. They successfully displayed this team speed in the opening game win over Stoneham 4-2, a game in which the Minutemen racked up eight stolen bases in eight attempts. The team also exhibited great base running skill, as more than speed is necessary to steal eight bases with no one being thrown out.

Ruocco pitched a complete game on his way to the victory. He struck out three Stoneham batters while allowing just four hits. Matt Reynolds, Tommy Whelan and Curley all picked up hits and stolen bases in the victory. In the second game of the young season, Lexington was defeated by Melrose11-6. Fortunately, Lexington was able to bounce back from the loss to Melrose by dismantling a Belmont team with a score of 11-1. Playing a key role in the victory was Minuteman starting pitcher Max McKenna. The junior went six strong innings, allowing just four hits and only one run, while walking three and striking out two. The Minutemen had a big fourth inning, with senior Lucas LeBlanc hitting a double and advancing to third on a passed ball. He scored on a single by Jason Fishman. McKenna laid down a sac bunt, followed by three straight walks to Reynolds, Whelan and Kaufman. Curley then singled, driving in two more runs. Reynolds, Curley and Peter Maltzan added more hits later in the game as Lexington continued to score runs. Despite such stellar play, the Minutemen then lost a tough decision to Woburn 4-3. They bounced back enthusiastically the next week, however, by pounding Wakefield by the score of 14-3 in a game that included a 10 run

Mike Clarke

In a game against Winchester, Nick Pisegna slides in an effort to avoid getting tagged out.

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Girls' Lacrosse Off to a Fantastic Start

By Stuart Easton

This year girls' lacrosse is hot out of the gates with a 5-1 record, putting them among the best teams in the Middlesex League. Despite the fact that the team has a very strong senior class, the Minutemen have been getting contributions from across the board.

This was perhaps most evident in their most recent game against Reading (7-1), in which the Minutemen were able to best the undefeated Rockets with hat-tricks by captains Lauren Schuler and Shelly Butler and two great goal performances by seniors Molly McGovern and Kelly Harvell.

Despite the apparent senior domination, freshman Michaela Cyr's contributions demonstrated that the team's talent is not concentrated in any one age group. Junior Laura Chiricosta and senior Kate Kimball provided staunch defensive support for the relentless attack.

If the girl's caliber of play stays constant, we can surely expect great things from this competent team.

Girls' Track Running Strong

By Andrew Snyder

The Lexington High girls track team has been running from behind all season after losing a close early meet to rival Stoneham. Although many members of the team were disheartened by this seemingly "false start," the girls have recently raced to four straight wins and stand at 4-1.

Currently, the Lexington Ladies are preparing for big meets against top rivals Reading and Burlington, which still gives them hope for a share of the Middlesex League title. The team has been lead by the three-headed monster of senior captains Jess Batty, Sharikka Finley-Moise, and Libby Mislan. Batty has made her presence felt in the shot-put while routinely sweeping the competition in the hurdles and triple jump. Finley-Moise has dominated the long jump and sprints while Mislan has led the middle-distance runners for Lexington. Other key senior team members have included Laura Sofen, Kathrine Foster, Meggie Heffernan, and Sarah Park. The younger members of the team have started to make key contributions led by Jaclyn Harvell, Lily Fesler, Menemsha McBain, Naomi Campbell, Jasmine Curry, and Anna Sheridan. While girls track continues to put there best foot forward after a stumble out of the gates, they hope for the best at the top of the league to put them back into contention.

Offbeat Athlete of the Month: Victor Wu

By Arjun Gokhale

While most LHS athletes can be found after school at Lincoln Field or the track, Victor Wu can be seen honing his Ping Pong skills in Commons II. Like other elite athletes, Wu has been able to maintain an intense focus and block out the distractions. He agrees that the confines of Commons II "are not the most conducive for Ping Pong" and has to deal with various clubs such as Big Kendo Pants and break dancing. And like those athletes, Wu has an intense dedication to his sport. He routinely puts long hours into perfecting his game. In addition to practicing up to five hours a week, he is the President of the Ping Pong club which meets two hours twice a week, and is tutored by an ex-Professional player from China for another three hours. Even though his practice is extremely time-consuming he can still find the time to give back to the game which he feels has given him so much.

Wu has felt a strong urge to help out other players. "When I was young [Coach] Gao Tian really helped me out with my abilities and I felt that I should try to be a mentor for others like he was for me". As President of the Ping Pong club, Wu brings together a diverse collection of the student body that is driven by a passion for the game. Even though he offers valuable leadership in the club, his greatest strength is

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Arjun Gokhale

Showing off his intense focus during a weekly practice session for the Ping Pong Club, President Victor Wu displays one of the key attributes that has allowed him to be successful.